GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4278
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2000
SHUKLA COMMISSION
HOLKHOMANG HAOKIP

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shukla Commission has submitted its recommendations on Telecommunication sector in NER;

(b) if so, the details therefor; and

(c) the time by which the said recommendations are likely to be implemented?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b)&(c): The salient recommendations of Shukla Commission on development of telecommunication in the North East in terms of PM`s special package are given below:-

Recommendation I

All administrative officers up to the Taluka/Block level should be provided with a fax connection in view of the difficult terrain and long delays involved in mail communications, especially in Arunachal Pradesh. DOT should do so by extending facsimile transmission facilities through the multiple-access radio relay system (MARR) which currently only provides for audio-quality pay-phones operations. This must be given top priority.

Recommendation II

The concerned departments should review the possibility of overall cost savings if the requirements of DOT, the Defence and para-military forces, police, AIR, DDand other can be served through common transmission masts, earth stations and other facilities, including shared sites and buildings.

Recommendation III

Moreh (Manipur) has a separate exchange. This should be provided ISDfacilities through VSNL in view of the new cross-border trade opportunities opening up. The same applies to Champhyai (Mizoram)and other potential international trade centers. The North East`s telecommunication links with Dhaka, Chittagong, Yangon, mandalay and Thimphu should be suitably strengthened.

Recommendation IV

Special connections and links should be provided to designated points within the region as well as to Bhutan and Bangladesh for transmission of rainfall, water discharge and flood data in real time. DOT/VSNL should plan this inconsultation with the Ministry of Water Resources in the interests of regional cooperation.

Status of the above recommendations are as given below:-

i) Fax on multiple-access radio relay system (MARR) is possible. However, since the MAAR technology has not been found dependable, further introduction of this system has been discontinued. FAX facility is possible on the new technology systems under consideration for the provision of Village Public Telephone such as CDOT-PMPand satellite systems. Government will be able to extend all possible assistance to the state government as soon as their requirements of FAX is provided.

ii) Requirements of Defence, Para-military forces, police, and AIRare normally projected to the DTO. These are being met from the common media of DTO. DTO`s networkin NE Region is adequate to meet the requirements. Expansion plans are worked out based on the demands.

iii) Moreh (Manipur) has 1000 line C-DOT Digital Electronic Exchange which is connected to Imphal through Optical Fibre systems to provide STD/ISDfacility. Champhai (Mizoram) is having 512-ILT and 1000 line C-DOT Exchange and it is connected at present with 5+4 circuits on Single Channel Per Carrieron Satellite communication system. Intermediate Data Rate (IDR) system on satellite

media and OFC also has been planned for Champai to improve communication facility to Champhai.

N.E. State`s International calls go through DTO`s Network to the National Gateway provided with International connectivity to the neighboring countries. There is a proposal to have a link from Agartala to Brahmanbaria in Bangladesh. Details of existing connectivity to neighbouring countries is given in Annexure.

iv) No requirement from the concerned Ministries have been received in this regard. However, any requirement can be met in the telecom network of DTO.

ANNEXURE

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITIES WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

1. NEPAL

(a) The medium between Nepal and India is Digital: From Patna to Birganj the digital medium is on Optical Fibre Cable and from Birganj to Kathmandu it is Digital Microwave.

(b) Out of 30 Mbs capacity available between Patna and Kathmandu eleven PCM slots are occupied at present and five slots are vacant which can be made available for leased lines.

2. BHUTAN

(a) The medium between India and Bhutan is Digital: From Siliguri to Hashimara the medium is on Optical Fibre Cable and Hashimara to Phutsholling is on 2GHz 120 Channel Microwave link.

(b) Out of the four PCMs available between Phutsholling and Siliguri, three are occupied by TAX circuits and one PCM is available for non-Tax circuits with first order MUX available at Calcutta and Phutsholling. Out of remaining 30 channels available in this M/W route five are occupied at present and twenty five circuits are free which can be utilized for future demand lines.

3. BANGLADESH

(a) The medium between India and Bangladesh is Analong M/W. There is a proposal for an optical fibre link from Calcutta to Jessore and a Microwave link from Agartala to Bharmanbaria.

(b) Between India and Bangladesh no spare slot is available as only one Supergroup is working at present which is occupied by TAX circuits.

Outgoing Telex traffic from Calcutta to Thimpu(Bhutan) and from Calcutta to Dhaka(Bangladesh) have been re-routed via VSNL GATEX Switch.